

MAYFLOWER Character profiles:

Edward Winslow: Religious but not obsessively so. Gets on well with people. Enthusiastic and charming. Supportive and practical. Gifted linguist (learns one of the Indian languages). Originally from Worcester.

Mrs Magdalene Winslow: Edward's mother. Adores her son but cannot understand why his religion is forcing him to flee the country.

Pastor John Robinson: Tall and dark. Distinguished Protestant theologian who had to resign his post at Corpus Christi College Cambridge because of his dissenting views. Minister to the exiled Separatist congregation in Leiden, which meets in his house at Groenepointe on the Kloksteeg in Leiden. Devoted to the needs of his followers. Charismatic and much loved.

William Brewster: Former diplomat, forced to resign because of his religious views. Hid John Robinson in his house in Scrooby Manor. Escaped with Robinson and the Scrooby congregation to Leiden in 1609. Once in Leiden, ran the Brewster Press, publishing Puritan literature.

Elizabeth Winslow: Spirited wife of Edward. Intelligent and assertive.

William Bradford: Intense and driven. A natural leader. From 1621 was the governor of the Plymouth colony until his death in 1657.

Thomas Weston: Dodgy businessman, acting for the Merchant Adventurers, the venture capitalists of their day.

Dorothy Bradford: Beautiful and petite but emotionally fragile. Daughter of English couple living in Leiden.

Captain Christopher Jones: Captain of the Mayflower which he part owns. Originally from Harwich, now living in Southwark, he is an experienced and skilled seaman and navigator - fortunately for the Pilgrims.

Christopher Martin: Bullying and dishonest man appointed by the Merchant Adventurers to procure supplies for the voyage. Refused to co-operate with anyone else. Was extremely unpleasant to crew and passengers on the Mayflower.

Stephen Hopkins: One of the so-called "Strangers" who joined the Pilgrims at Southampton. The only one who had any proper experience of the New World. He lived in Jamestown for 5 years and survived shipwreck off Bermuda in 1609. Assertive and confident.

John Billington: Somewhat disreputable and "wild" character, father of uncontrollable sons. Another of the "Strangers." Was the first person to be executed for murder in the Plymouth colony.

Mary Brewster: Supportive wife of William Brewster.

Thomas Henley: Unpleasant, jeering sailor who taunts the Pilgrims while on board ship.